

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Chief Education Officer

Educational Services: 7 December 2016

Subject: Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Examination Results 2016

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To update Members on the performance of West Dunbartonshire schools in the national Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations of 2016.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** Members are requested to:

- a) Note the contents of this report and the attached appendices;
- b) Congratulate the pupils, parents and carers, staff and centrally deployed staff for achievements in this year's examinations.

3. Background

- 3.1** In previous years, the Scottish Government released its publication Standard Tables and Charts (STACs) annually. This gave a detailed analysis of the national SQA Examination results. With the introduction of the new National qualifications bringing the Senior Phase into line with Curriculum for Excellence, STACs was discontinued and replaced in 2014 with a tool called Insight. This new tool saw the emphasis shift in how a school is judged to be performing. Instead of the previous measures of how many pupils gained a number of passes at specific levels, a school is now measured according to its performance in key national benchmarks. These benchmarks encourage taking a holistic approach to evaluating achievement and attainment. A complete picture of local authority and school performance requires the national benchmarks to be considered as a whole. The four National Benchmarks focus on:

- 1. Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy
- 2. Improving attainment for all
- 3. Increasing post school participation
- 4. Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers.

- 3.2** Insight presents information on the achievements of school leavers at their point of exit from school, be that in S4, S5 or S6. Previously STACs focussed on the attainment of an individual cohort taken as a whole (S4, S5 or S6). This change is in line with the Curriculum for Excellence approach which sees the Senior Phase as a single coherent experience leading to a positive

destination. Each young person's experience will be different depending on their needs.

- 3.3** Insight data is drawn from wider sources than STACs data which was solely from SQA. It includes data from Skills Development Scotland about post school leaver destinations, wider achievement awards accredited from organisations other than the SQA and socio-economic data relating to other characteristics of young people. As these sources present data at different times of year there are implications for the timing of processes associated with performance analysis. Insight is updated twice a year, in August with SQA exam results and in February when it updates leaver destinations and the four National Measures. As such, in August Insight is always showing the national measures of leavers from the previous session. It is for this reason that it is not possible to provide a complete picture of performance through the four national measures until after the February update.
- 3.4** Benchmark comparisons are no longer made against real comparator schools and local authorities as in STACs but against virtual comparators. Insight makes these virtual comparisons by selecting real young people from across Scotland that match the characteristics of students in West Dunbartonshire schools or in the local authority as a whole. In the case of school leavers, ten comparable virtual leavers are made for every one of our school leavers from West Dunbartonshire.
- 3.5** 2016 is the first year that we have only presented new National qualifications, with the introduction of the new National 7 Advanced Higher qualification. As such, year by year comparisons should be taken with caution, as the previous year may not refer to the same qualification. **Table 1** below shows the introduction rate of the new National qualifications:

Table 1

Year	SCQF4		SCQF5		SCQF6		SCQF7
2012-2013	Intermediate 1		Intermediate 2		Higher		Advanced Higher
2013-2014	Int. 1	National 4	Int. 2	National 5	Higher		Advanced Higher
2014-2015	National 4		National 5		Higher	National 6 Higher	Advanced Higher
2015-2016	National 4		National 5		National 6 Higher		National 7 Advanced Higher
2016-2017	National 4		National 5		National 6 Higher		National 7 Advanced Higher

- 3.6** Schools will continue to use the SQA results data released in August to inform their school and department improvement agenda in relation to attainment.

- 3.7** Leadership for Learning meetings between school management teams and the central Education, Learning and Attainment team have been moved to fit with the second update of Insight. Due to the period of industrial action last session, the Leadership for Learning meetings did not take place.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** Overall levels of attainment across West Dunbartonshire have slightly increased – with 98% of learners achieving a pass in a National Qualification.
- 4.1.1** At National 4, the West Dunbartonshire data shows an identical level of attainment when compared with 2015 (98% pass rate).
- 4.1.2** At National 5, the West Dunbartonshire data shows a decrease in attainment of 1% when compared with 2015 (79% pass rate compared with 80% in 2015).
- 4.1.3** At Higher, the West Dunbartonshire data shows an identical level of attainment when compared with 2015 (75% pass rate).
- 4.1.4** At Advanced Higher, the West Dunbartonshire data shows an improvement of 1% when compared with 2015 (77% pass rate compared with 76% in 2015). As this is the first year of presentation, the comparison has been made against the “old” Advanced Highers.
- 4.1.5** Over three years we have seen a reduction in the number presentations resulting in ‘no awards’ at National 5 and National 6 Higher. Whilst this trend is positive, further work needs to be done to reduce these levels further. At national 7 Advanced Higher, the trend is negative, with an increase in the number of presentations resulting in ‘no awards’. This is shown in **table 3** below.
- 4.1.6** The performance of each school in relation to the West Dunbartonshire average is shown in **table 2** below. It should be noted however that percentage pass rates do not convey the number of young people in the cohort being presented for the qualification. Each school also has its own criteria when presenting young people for qualifications. In direct response to this and the number of ‘no awards’ highlighted in 4.1.5, a working group has been established to investigate the development of a consistent council wide policy for presentation that establishments would adopt.

Table 2

	Overall Pass Rates (A - C 2014 to 2016)											
	National 4			National 5			Higher			Advanced Higher		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
Clydebank High School	76%	99%	98%	80%	70%	70%	71%	72%	74%	76%	78%	78%
Dumbarton Academy	96%	94%	97%	74%	86%	78%	73%	78%	75%	89%	96%	65%
Our Lady and St. Patrick's High School	87%	100%	95%	77%	87%	85%	73%	85%	83%	69%	75%	89%
St. Peter the Apostle High School	88%	96%	99%	75%	78%	80%	72%	73%	75%	74%	75%	74%
Vale of Leven Academy	99%	100%	100%	75%	79%	80%	67%	71%	71%	79%	66%	76%
WDC Average	88%	98%	98%	76%	80%	79%	71%	75%	75%	75%	76%	77%

NB - *It should be noted that percentage pass rates do not convey the number of young people in the cohort being presented for the qualification.*

Each school also has its own criteria when presenting young people for qualifications.

Table 3

	Percentage of 'no awards'								
	National 5			National 6 Higher			National 7 Advanced Higher		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
Clydebank High School	13%	22%	17%	17%	15%	15%	13%	13%	17%
Dumbarton Academy	16%	8%	16%	15%	13%	15%	3%	0%	22%
Our Lady and St. Patrick's High School	13%	8%	9%	17%	9%	9%	14%	20%	10%
St. Peter the Apostle High School	18%	15%	13%	18%	17%	14%	17%	11%	15%
Vale of Leven Academy	17%	15%	12%	20%	19%	18%	11%	20%	15%
WDC Average	16%	14%	13%	17%	15%	14%	13%	14%	15%

4.2 Insight data. As noted in 3.3 above the data for the four national benchmarks for session 2015-16 is not finalised and published in Insight until February 2017. Therefore data shown below will not include leaver destination data or indeed changes reflected by the Post Results Service offered by the SQA.

In the sections that follow, we have presented data relating to our performance at local authority level. Performance of each of our mainstream secondary schools is presented in **Appendix 1**.

4.2.1 National Benchmark 1: Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

Figure 1 below shows the levels of attainment in Literacy and Numeracy obtained by WDC school leavers at SCQF levels 4 and 5 (*Literacy and Numeracy qualifications now include awards for Literacy, English, English as a Second Language, Numeracy and Mathematics*). It shows that at both levels leavers in WDC are achieving higher levels of attainment than those in our virtual comparator local authority, with statistically significant differences highlighted in the blue comment box. This result is gratifying given the focus that the service has taken in these core areas.

Figure 1 – Performance in Literacy and Numeracy



Testing found that the following comparisons were significant.

Performance in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 4, 2014 is much greater than our Virtual Comparator

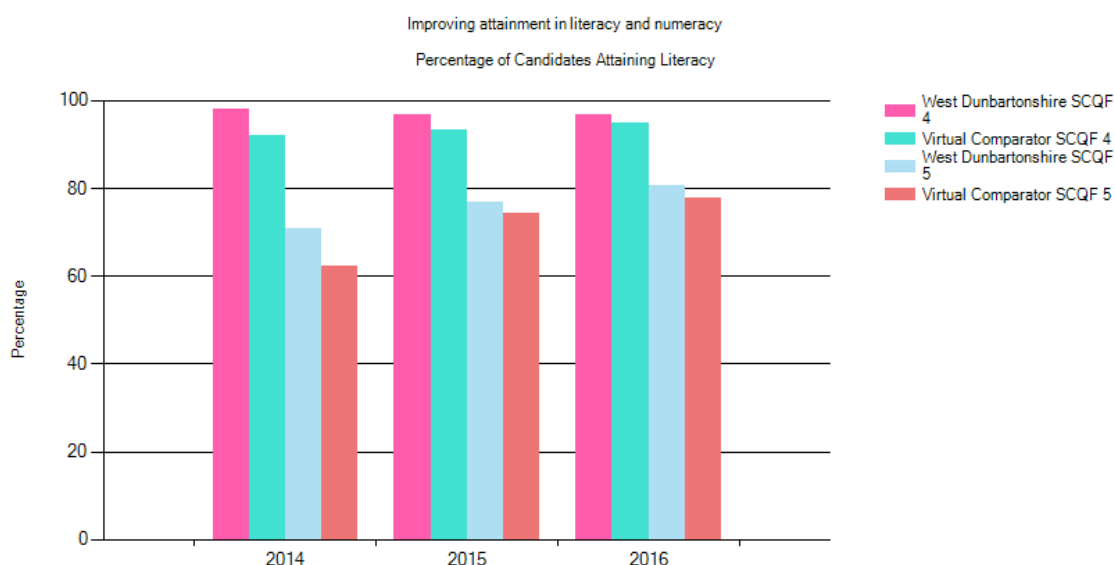
Performance in Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 5, 2014 is greater than our Virtual Comparator

When viewed at individual school level, it is worth highlighting that Our Lady & St. Patrick's High School is ahead of its virtual comparator at both SCQF 4 and 5. For 2016, Insight notes that the Level 5 performance was significant, with an increase of 13 percentage points. *(Note – further details of individual school performance can be found in **Appendix 1**)*

National Benchmark 1: Improving attainment in Literacy.

Figures 2 below shows our performance in literacy in isolation from numeracy.

Figure 2 – Performance in Literacy



Testing found that the following comparisons were significant.

Performance in Literacy at SCQF Level 4, 2016 is much greater than our Virtual Comparator

Performance in Literacy at SCQF Level 4, 2015 is much greater than our Virtual Comparator

Performance in Literacy at SCQF Level 5, 2015 is greater than our Virtual Comparator

Performance in Literacy at SCQF Level 4, 2014 is much greater than our Virtual Comparator

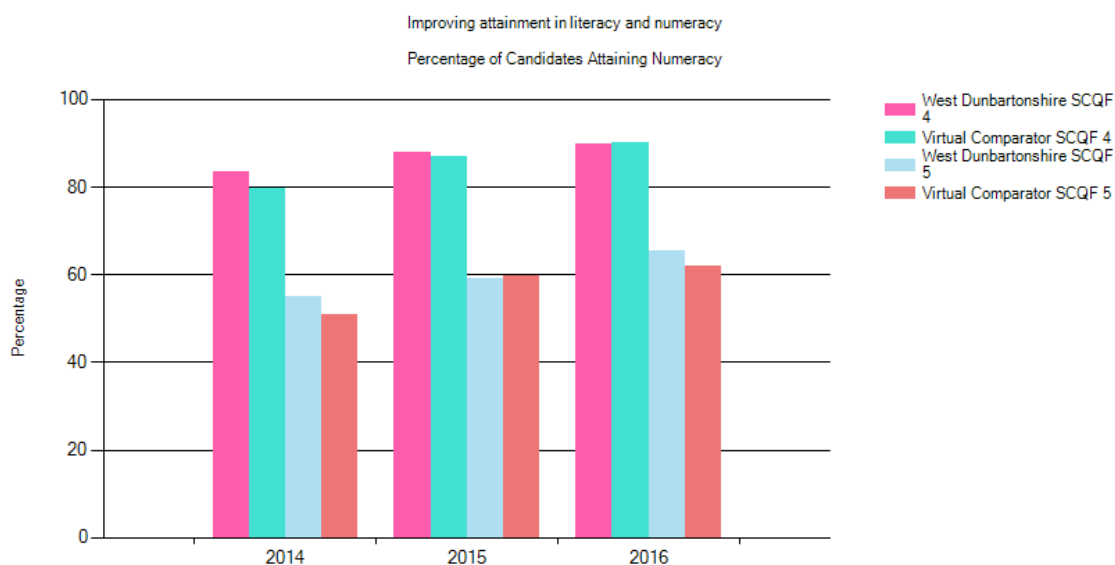
Performance in Literacy at SCQF Level 5, 2014 is greater than our Virtual Comparator

This shows that whilst we have broadly maintained our performance over time in literacy at National 4, we have improved our performance at National 5. Compared to our virtual comparator, we are consistently above at both National 4 and 5 over time.

National Benchmark 1: Improving attainment in Numeracy.

Figure 3 below shows our performance in numeracy in isolation from literacy.

Figure 3 – Performance in Numeracy



Performance in Numeracy at SCQF Level 4, 2014 is much greater than our Virtual Comparator

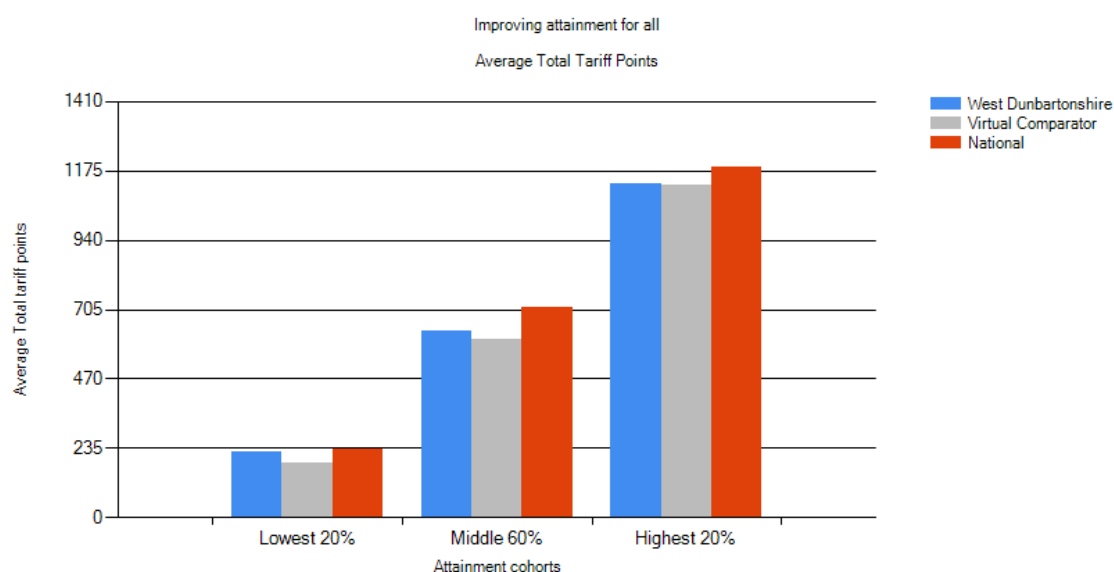
This shows that whilst we have improved our performance over time in numeracy at both level 4 and 5, the gap has closed in relation to our virtual comparator at National 4. At National 5, we have increased our performance against our virtual comparator since 2015.

4.2.2 National Benchmark 2: Improving attainment for all

This measure allows us to examine how different ability cohorts are attaining in relation to both a virtual cohort and the national one. Attainment is measured using a tariff scale developed for Insight. This scale allocates points to each qualification (courses and units which make up courses are all allocated points). The number of points awarded is dependent on the level of the course, with more demanding qualifications being awarded more points than less demanding ones. Three cohorts are identified, those in the bottom 20% of tariff points scored, those in the middle 60% of tariff points scored and those in the top 20% of tariff points scored.

Figure 4 below shows the average total tariff points gained by our cohorts of young people.

Figure 4 – Average Total Tariff points



This shows that the least able young people in West Dunbartonshire are attaining relatively better than those of our comparator, and broadly in line with the national cohort. Young people in the middle 60% are showing higher levels of attainment than our comparator but below the national cohort. The highest attaining cohort's tariff score is slightly above those in the virtual comparator and below the national cohort.

4.2.3 National Benchmark 3: Increasing post school participation

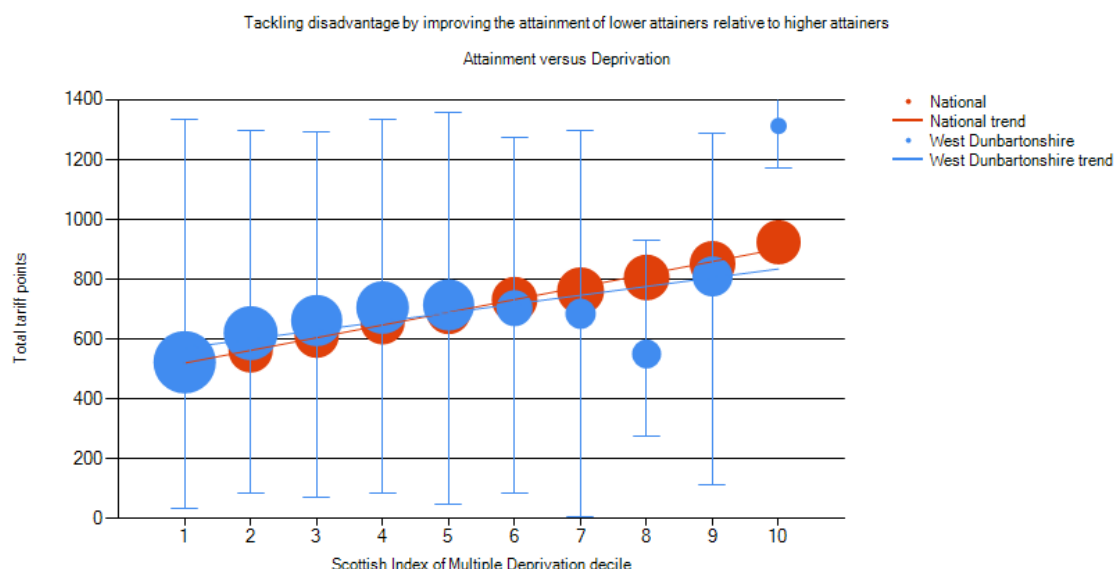
The third national benchmark looks at the destinations of our young people. This data will be updated in Insight in February 2017, so this measure will be reported to a future committee.

4.2.4 National Benchmark 4: Tackling disadvantage by improving the attainment of lower attainers relative to higher attainers

This measure shows attainment measured using the same tariff scale as referred to in the **Improving attainment for all** measure above. Leavers are presented in a decile according to their Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data. Decile 1 refers to the attainment of young people with postcodes within data zones identified as being in the 10% most deprived in Scotland according to SIMD. Those young people in decile 10 have postcodes in the 10% least deprived data zones according to SIMD. This information is presented in figure 5 below. The size of each of the coloured 'blobs' in the chart represents the number of young people in each decile. Ideally the attainment line for Scotland would be level through each decile showing that postcode background had no effect on a student's attainment. Unfortunately this is not the case nationally.

The vertical bars drawn through each 'blob' show the range of tariff scores achieved in each decile by students in WDC.

Figure 5 – Attainment versus Deprivation



Testing found that the following comparisons were significant.

In SIMD decile 7, our performance is much lower than the National Establishment.

In SIMD decile 8, our performance is much lower than the National Establishment.

In SIMD decile 2, our performance is greater than the National Establishment.

In SIMD decile 3, our performance is greater than the National Establishment.

Figure 5 above shows that the majority of the school leavers in WDC have postcodes in the lower SIMD deciles (larger 'blobs' in deciles 1-5) and consequently that few of our leavers reside in upper decile postcodes. The data shows that the young people of WDC in deciles 1-5 have attainment better than the national trend. It is also notable that the vertical bars show that some students in these deciles have achieved high tariff scores.

This graph also shows that our students in deciles 6-9 are underperforming in relation to the national trend. This is significantly lower in decile 8. It is also worth noting that although our students in decile 10 have performed below both the national and virtual cohorts it is not seen as statistically relevant as our number of students in this decile is so small. It is also worth noting that only one of our schools has student from decile 10 (Our Lady & St. Patrick's High School), and that two of our schools have no students in decile 8 (Dumbarton Academy and Our Lady & St. Patrick's High School).

School level data is presented in appendix 1. When viewed at school level there are significant points of fluctuation worth noting in this measure:

- In Clydebank High school only decile 4 is above the national average, with every other decile being below.
- By contrast, in Dumbarton Academy only deciles 6 and 9 are below the national average, with every other decile being above.
- In Our Lady & St. Patrick's High School, all deciles are above the national figure. It should be noted that performance in deciles 1 – 5 and 7 are significantly above the national average.
- In St Peter the Apostle High School, deciles 1, 4, 7, 8 and 9 are below the national average, however deciles 2, 3, 5 and 6 are above. It should be noted that performance in decile 3 is significantly above the national average, but performance in deciles 7 and 8 are significantly below.
- In Vale of Leven Academy, deciles 1, 4 and 7-9 are below the national average, whilst deciles 2, 3, 5 and 6 are above. It should be noted that performance in deciles 7 and 9 are significantly below the national average.











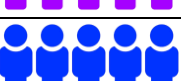



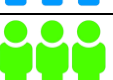


4.3 The relationship between qualifications and destinations.

Since the establishment of Curriculum for Excellence, young people are entitled to a Senior Phase that continues to develop the four capacities and gain qualifications, and entitled to support into making a transition into a sustained positive destination. With Insight, these two entitlements have been brought much closer together. Often the relationship between qualifications and potential destinations is not clear.

To help clarify this, and show this in a meaningful context, for the first time we have looked at presenting this information in a different way. If qualifications are a means to gain entry to a further destination post school, then we have looked to break this down in a visual format to show the percentage of our school leavers that have gained the qualifications necessary to enter into a variety of destinations. **Figure 6** below shows this for West Dunbartonshire as a whole, whilst **Appendix 2** shows this broken down individually for young people from each establishment. To give an indication of progress, we have compared the levels of attainment to both the previous cohort, and at school level we have also compared levels of attainment to the authority wide figures.

To calculate the levels of attainment, school leavers from S4 in 2014, S5 in 2015 and S6 in 2016 have been grouped together. This shows the attainment level of the cohort as a whole.

Figure 6 – Relationship between Qualifications and Destinations

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE: Outcome of the first year group across West Dunbartonshire Council to complete the Senior Phase of CfE			
Pupils achieved the following levels of attainment:		These enable the following post-school destinations:	In comparison with the preceding year group the following change was seen:
	99.6% of pupils achieved units at SCQF Level 1 or above	Accredited achievement which evidences personal skills needed for a range of Modern Apprenticeships and employment opportunities	0.1% fewer pupils achieved SCQF unit awards
	90.0% of pupils achieved Literacy at SCQF Level 4 or above		5.4% fewer pupils achieved literacy at SCQF level 4 or above 
	91.4% of pupils achieved 3 or more National 4s or better	Qualified for more selective Modern Apprenticeships (e.g. administration)	0.1% more pupils achieved 3, 4 or 5 National 4s or better
	76.2% of pupils achieved Numeracy at SCQF Level 4 or above	Accredited achievement in numeracy skills, enabling a wider range of opportunities	5.5% more pupils achieved numeracy at SCQF level 4 or above 
	66.7% of pupils achieved 3 or more National 5s or better	Qualified for the most selective Modern Apprenticeships (e.g. finance, engineering)	0.2% fewer pupils achieved 3, 4 or 5 National 5s or better
	58.3% of pupils achieved 1 or more Higher	Qualified to progress to study an HNC	7.0% more pupils achieved 1 or more Highers 
	39.2% of pupils achieved 3 or more Highers	Qualified for a range of Higher Education opportunities	4.5% more pupils achieved 3 or more Highers 
	19.9% of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at Grades A or B	Qualified for more selective degree courses (e.g. science, etc)	3.5% more pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at Grades A or B 
	17.1% of pupils achieved 1 or more Advanced Higher	Better qualified for more selective degree courses	3.4% more pupils achieved 1 or more Advanced Highers 
	6.9% of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at Grade A	Qualified for the most selective degree courses (e.g. veterinary science, medicine)	1.2% more pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at Grade A 

4.4 Members may wish to note that WDC pupils have demonstrated success in a wide variety of other qualifications which contribute to wider achievement. A significant and increasing number of our pupils are taking courses with partner providers such as West College Scotland and WD Leisure Trust in a variety of areas including construction, motor vehicle engineering, hospitality, hairdressing, early education and childcare, sport and recreation, beauty and photography. In addition, a wide range of non-SQA accredited qualifications have been achieved. These include:

- ASDAN awards
- Caritas award
- Dance leadership
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Fashion brand retailing (Caledonian University)
- Forest Schools
- Green Flag Award
- John Muir award
- Mark Scott Foundation Award
- Mini Vinnie Award
- Pool life guard
- Pope Francis Faith Award
- Saltire awards
- Scottish Sports Award
- Social Enterprise Academy Award
- Sport leadership
- Stonewall Champion Award
- West Dunbartonshire Volunteering Award
- Youth Achievement Awards

4.5 The Council will ensure that schools are given every challenge and support to raise attainment in the areas outlined in this report through both local engagement and by encouraging involvement with national bodies.

5. People Implications

5.1 There are no personnel issues related to this report.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications related to this report.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 As members are only being asked to note the contents of this report and the attached appendix a risk assessment is not required.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** Educational Services has carried out a screening in equality for this report. The report was found not to be relevant to the specified equality duty because the content provides an update on service delivery rather than stating a change of policy.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** Legal Services and the Section 95 Officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** This report reflects the Council's aspiration to improve life chances for children and young people which is one of the strategic priorities for 2012 - 2017.

Laura Mason

Chief Education Officer

Date:

Person to Contact: Andrew Brown, Senior Education Officer: Performance & Improvement, Education, Learning and Attainment, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton G82 3PU. Telephone (01389) 776970.

Appendices: **Appendix 1** – Insight data for West Dunbartonshire schools.
Appendix 2 – The relationship between Qualifications and Destinations.

Background Papers: EIA

Wards Affected: All council Wards.